

REMARKS

By this Amendment After Final, Applicant has proposed canceling claims 21, 25, and 28-32 without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter would be added. Claims 1-12, 14-20, 23, 24, 26, and 27 would remain in the application.

As an initial matter, Applicant would like to thank Examiner Fletcher for the courtesy and consideration extended to Applicant's representative during the personal interview conducted on May 18, 2004.

During the interview, the Examiner indicated that claims 1-12, 14-21, and 23-25 are patentably distinguishable from the Osanai et al. reference because "Osanai et al. do not disclose that actuator, guide bar and stage, all in the same plane." Interview Summary. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication. Applicant notes, however, that based on the Examiner's comment about why the Examiner believes those claims to be allowable, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 26 and 27 should also be allowable, since they recite at least similar subject matter. Furthermore, Applicant has canceled claims 21 and 25 because those claims do not recite the subject matter the Examiner indicated as being allowable. Nevertheless, Applicant expressly reserves the right to file continuing applications containing claims which include the subject matter recited in claims 21 and 25 as well as the subject matter recited in any other claims canceled during prosecution of this application. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-12, 14-20, 23, 24, 26, and 27 should be allowable if the Examiner allows entry of this Amendment After Final.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 9, 11-15, 17, 18, and 20-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Osanai et al. (U.S.

Patent No. 5,864,389); and rejected claims 3, 7, 10, 16, and 19 under 35 U.S.C.

§ 103(a) as being unpatentable over Osanai et al. in view of Yuan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,130,517). By this Amendment After Final, Applicant proposes canceling claims 21, 25, and 28-32. From the remaining claims, only claims 1, 12, 14, 23, and 26 are independent claims, and as outlined above, the Examiner indicated during the interview that claims 1, 12, 14, 23 are patentably distinguishable from the Osanai et al. reference. Applicant respectfully submits that remaining independent claim 26 should also be allowable since it recites portions of the subject matter that the Examiner indicated as being allowable.

Applicant's invention as recited in independent claim 26 is directed to a method for driving a stage assembly including a first moving member and a second moving member. The method includes the steps of driving the first moving member in a first direction, driving the second moving member in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction, and applying a force on the first moving member at a portion in the second direction. A center of gravity of the first moving member and a center of gravity of the second moving member are substantially positioned in a plane parallel to the first and second directions, and the portion is substantially positioned in the plane parallel to the first and second directions and aligned with the center of gravity of the second moving member in the second direction.

The Osanai et al. reference does not disclose or suggest at least a method for driving a stage assembly including a first moving member and a second moving member, wherein a center of gravity of the first moving member and a center of gravity

of the second moving member are substantially positioned in the plane parallel to first and second perpendicularly-related directions.

During the interview and in the Interview Summary, the Examiner indicated that the Osanai et al. reference does not disclose or suggest “actuator, guide bar and stage, all in the same plane.” Applicant respectfully submits that the Osanai et al. reference also does not disclose a method for driving a stage assembly including a first moving member and a second moving member, wherein a center of gravity of the first moving member and a center of gravity of the second moving member are substantially positioned in the same plane, as recited in independent claim 26. Therefore, Applicant’s independent claim 26 should be patentably distinguishable from the Osanai et al. reference.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner also rejected claims 3, 7, 10, 16, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Osanai et al. in view of Yuan et al. Since each of those claims depends either from allowable independent claim 1 or from allowable independent claim 14, each of those dependent claims should be allowable for the same reasons as their corresponding independent claims as well as by virtue of their recitations of additional novel and non-obvious subject matter.

Conclusions

For at least the reasons set forth above, independent claims 1, 12, 14, 23, and 26, should be allowable. Dependent claims 2-11, 15-20, 24, and 27 depend from one of independent claims 1, 14, 23, and 26. Consequently, those dependent claims should be allowable for at least the same reasons the claims from which they depend

are allowable. Therefore, upon entry of this Amendment After Final, all of pending claims 1-12, 14-20, 23, 24, 26, and 27 should be allowable.

Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration of this application, the withdrawal of the outstanding objection and claim rejections, and the allowance of claims 1-12, 14-20, 23, 24, 26, and 27.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation might advance prosecution, the Examiner is cordially invited to call Applicant's undersigned attorney at 571-203-2739.

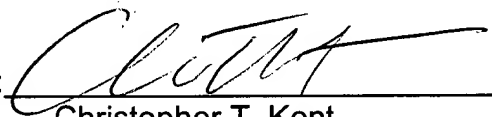
Applicant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action contains assertions concerning the related art and/or the claims. Regardless of whether those assertions are addressed specifically herein, Applicant respectfully declines to automatically subscribe to them.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
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